

(Breakthrough, March 1985)

A COMPELLING EXPERIENCE

by Ed Levy

I am willing to share this experience in the BREAKTHROUGH newsletter of the Monroe Institute of Applied Sciences but do not wish to have it published in any other form.

In early May of 1984, I had reached “a point” in the treatment of a woman in her late 30’s. F. is a good person, very religious, married, three children, works and “maintains” in spite of a moderately severe, anxious depression. Her distress seems reactive to a number of factors, including her having a 19 year old handicapped son; a 15 year old nastily rebellious daughter; a mother-in-law who verbally degrades and assaults her, and even uses gifts to the children to buy their agreement against the patient; and, most disabling, the preoccupying memory of rape by her drunken, wife-abusing brother-in-law some 12 years previously. This occurred while she stayed in his home in another city, as the family gathered for her own brother’s wedding. There followed a pregnancy and struggles with an abortion. Having done what I could to provide relief—psychotherapeutically and pharmacotherapeutically, and remembering that there was a segment on the High Performance Ten about something like “letting go” or “forgetting and releasing”, I called and spoke with Jean who suggested that I could use Exploring 1, *Mission 10* and talk to the patient while she was hearing it. Jean sent the tape, and there followed a TURNING POINT. Having listened to the tape a time or two myself, using a splitter with two headphones on my little Fischer personal stereo cassette player, I set out to do something for her - not really knowing what that would be.

After the humming, very gently I invited her to experience a portion of the awfulness—as much as she felt able to. I then said something like: “Take a piece of the feeling and put it on a note of the music and hear it disappear in time.” (I really don’t know where this notion came from, but it was certainly a fortunate one). Many invitational instructions like this produced a reduction in the intensity of the feeling. Emboldened, I took her through the whole experience, and through all of her body, quite explicitly cleansing.

This was the first instance of what I have come to call a “cleansing method” (in this case, I have referred to it as a “whole body douche”). Seven months later, she is still not bothered anymore by the horror. I remain somewhat awestruck.

A couple of weeks later we did another tape on her rape and torment and helplessness in regard to her mother-in-law. Within a day after that, she told her mother-in-law off, for the first time, in a manner that her husband fully supported and which has subsequently rather diminished that difficulty. (The rapidity of action was a bit concerning. This has happened with a couple of other patients in a similarly concerning way—but there have not been negative

consequences, and they have been glad for their action. F's the only one where I have a relative's corroboration of the "goodness" of the effect). About a month ago, we did a tape about the either/or black and white nature of her rages at her daughter, trying to help her learn to speak to and hold on to the good in the daughter. She says this maybe ameliorated the home situation somewhat—but maybe on this one she is trying to be nice to me—we'll see.

Including these three tapes, I have worked (mostly with this first Exploring tape) in this fashion about 40 times. None have been as striking as the very first, but some have been quite notable in their impact.

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